

Eat to Evolve!

By Diana Allen, MS, CNS

Is it possible that the food we eat influences not only our health, but the thoughts we think, the emotions we feel and the spiritual progress of our lives? Absolutely! And what about the health of future generations? Could it be that our personal dietary habits help determine the actual physical biology and genetic viability of our descendants? Without a doubt!

We are, each of us, a work in process - growing, changing and evolving from birth to death. This idea of progressive change can be applied to our diet as well. What we eat is an ever-evolving aspect of our lives - both as individuals, and as a species.

Individually, once we bring diet into consciousness - whether for health reasons, medical reasons, ethical or spiritual reasons - our diet becomes a work in progress, and an important part of our conscious evolution. So from a personal perspective, eating to evolve is about discovering, learning and understanding what way of eating is best for us - best to help our own individual and unique body-mind-spirit self become and remain healthy, energetic, radiant, satisfied and fulfilled.

From a larger perspective, eating to evolve is about the evolution, health and survival of the human race. Clearly, our bodies are designed to run on the foods that we evolved eating, and have been eating for the longest amount of time - whole, natural foods: plant foods, raw foods, simple cooked foods, and wild animal foods. Animal foods are no longer a must for most of us, but those who choose to eat animal products can do so healthfully by incorporating organically raised flesh foods and raw dairy into a primarily plant-based diet.

Ultimately, I believe, as Albert Einstein suggested, that humans can and must evolve into eating a vegetarian diet; that is, if we wish to survive into the coming millennia. (Earth will endure; our species may not.) The large scale, factory model production of meat animals is neither ecologically sustainable nor health promoting, but it is the only way to feed mass meat to millions. Meaning if we are to survive, mass meat will have to go!

Environmentally, factory farming is a disaster. From a health perspective, the flesh of factory farmed animals is vastly inferior to the flesh of naturally raised, grass-fed, free-roaming or wild animals. And finally, if not first, factory farming is ethically indefensible. Our very human capacity for empathy and compassion clearly indicates that causing other sentient beings to languish in darkness, suffer and die for our daily consumption is wrong - especially when human health is not incumbent upon flesh-eating!

A desire to "do no harm" goes hand-in-hand with spiritual evolution. Vegetarian or vegan diets exemplify this principle of ahimsa. But from an eat to evolve perspective, it is not necessary to be a total vegetarian to achieve vibrant health. Instead, we consider simply the obvious: those foods which have been eaten longest by humans are the foods best suited to the optimum functioning of our bodies. This automatically includes all naturally growing and wild foods, and automatically eliminates all processed food, junk food, artificial additives (colors, flavors, preservatives), and bleached/refined sugars and flours.

So what do we eat to evolve? The evolution-appropriate diet includes an abundance of plant foods, mainly vegetables and fruits, along with seeds and nuts. It includes raw honey, and a variety of animal foods (fish, eggs, wild game) if desired. As for the foods of agriculture – whole and sprouted grains and legumes, and raw dairy products (ideally from goat or sheep) - these are the “new foods on the block” for humans from an evolutionary perspective. As such, I believe that physiologically, humans are in the process of evolving to thrive on such fare. Therefore, grains, beans and dairy should be consumed judiciously if at all, not as a replacement for the original, evolution-appropriate foods, but in addition to.

The evolution-appropriate diet includes both raw foods and cooked foods. Humans have been cooking for a quarter million to half a million years - a significant span of time to enable the digestive and other body systems to adapt successfully. Of course, humans (and pre-humans) ate raw foods for far longer – some say at least 4 million years - so raw food diets are certainly evolution-appropriate for those capable of eating at that level.

An intelligent raw food diet can lead to boundless energy, mental clarity and optimum health. I encourage anyone who is interested in exploring this way of eating to approach raw as a mindful transition while paying careful attention to elimination. Raw foods are extremely cleansing, and it is important that the waste matter awakened by these foods leaves the body in a timely and efficient manner.

Going raw too suddenly can shock both the physical and the psycho-social-emotional body, causing a new set of unnecessary problems. Simply cooked vegetables, such as steamed broccoli or baked yams, are valuable in helping to slow down cleansing, as they are clean foods that add nothing harmful to the body. Remember, it is not necessary to eat a 100% raw diet to be healthy, and evolution does not indicate or require it, but for best results, a significant percentage of the diet should be raw unless otherwise indicated. Raw foods are full of life force energy, fiber, nutrients, enzymes and juicy goodness - don't miss them!

The chronic diseases that plague modern society are a direct result of poor dietary and lifestyle habits. Eating to evolve yourself - and your species - is a way to help bypass this fate. Natural whole foods, pure water, daily vigorous exercise and adequate sleep and relaxation are the keys to radiant health and happiness. May we use them to open the door to a healthy body, an alert mind and an ecstatically vibrant life!

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